

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICESDepartment of Social Services Public Records Access

Public records maintained by the California Department of Social Services are available for inspection by members of the public pursuant to the following procedures:

1. Public records are available for inspection during the department's regular business hours. In addition, many records are readily available at the department's website at www.dss.cahwet.ca.gov
2. Requests for inspection or copying of public records:
 - a. Should be made in writing unless the request involves records which are maintained by the department for the purpose of immediate public inspection.
 - b. Should not interfere with the ordinary business operations of the department. The operational functions of the department will not be suspended to permit inspection of records during periods in which such records are reasonably required by department personnel in the performance of their duties. If the request requires review of numerous records, a mutually agreeable time should be established for the inspection of the records.
 - c. Should be specific and focused. The request should sufficiently describe records so that identification, location and retrieval of the records can be achieved by department personnel. However, department personnel may assist a member of the public in making a focused request, based on the purpose of the request, by describing the information technology and physical location in which the records exist and by providing suggestions for overcoming any practical basis for denying access to the records or information sought.
 - d. Should be directed to the office, division, branch, or section of the department that maintains the desired records. If the requestor does not know where the desired records are maintained, the request for inspection should be directed to the Deputy Director, Public Affairs and Outreach, 744 P Street, MS 17-09, Sacramento, CA 95814, for routing to the appropriate official.
3. It may take up to 10 days for the department to review the request and inform the requestor whether or not the department has the records and whether or not they may be provided. Occasionally, the Department may need up to 14 additional days pursuant to Government Code Section 6253(c).
4. The department may not disclose any records which are exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act, because the record contains confidential information about a person or is not public for another specified reason. (Gov. Code § 6254)
5. Records may be viewed (inspected) in the department's offices. Persons inspecting department records shall not destroy, mutilate, deface, alter, or remove any such records from the department. The department reserves the right to have departmental personnel present in order to prevent the loss or destruction of records.
6. Upon payment of a fee for the cost of duplication of the records, the department shall provide a copy of any public record. The requesting party must pay .10 per page for copies. When data compilation, extraction or programming involving an electronic record is required, the requesting party must pay full costs which will be estimated before the information is prepared. (Gov. Code, sec. 6253(b)(2).)
7. A copy of these guidelines is available free of charge upon request.